

# Self-Reported Rheumatic Diseases and Early Retirement in Portugal – Results from the Portuguese Epidemiology Study on Rheumatic Diseases (EpiReumaPt)



Pedro Lares<sup>1</sup>; Helena Canhão<sup>1,2</sup>; Gouveia M<sup>3</sup>; Rodrigues A<sup>1</sup>; Nélia Gouveia<sup>1</sup>; Jaime Branco<sup>1,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> EpiReumaPt – Portuguese Society of Rheumatology

<sup>2</sup> IMM - Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade de Lisboa; Rheumatology Department - Hospital de Santa Maria, Lisbon.

<sup>3</sup> Católica Lisbon School of Business, Lisbon.

<sup>4</sup> CEDOC, Faculdade de Ciências Médicas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa; Rheumatology Department - Hospital Egas Moniz, Lisbon.



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# INTRODUCTION

- Early exit from work / Early Retirement continues to occur frequently and is a major challenge to social and health policies.
- There are several factors affecting early retirement and health problems are at the forefront. Rheumatic diseases (RD) being some of the most relevant.
- RD may be associated with pain and physical disability that may lead to early withdrawal from paid employment, generating substantial economic costs to society.
- We aim to examine the association between self-reported RD and early retirement by using large real-world observational data.

# METHODS

- EpiReumaPt was a national, cross-sectional, population-based study conducted from September 2011 to December 2013.
- 10,661 inhabitants were randomly surveyed in order to capture and characterize all cases of RD within a representative sample of the Portuguese population, which were stratified by administrative territorial units (NUTSII).
- In this analysis we used all participants aged between 50 and 65 years old, near the official retirement age (N=2,792; females: 1,727).
- The association of self-reported RD and early retirement was tested using individual level logistic regression. All estimates were computed as weighted proportions, in order to take into account the sampling design.

# RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- 29.9% of the Portuguese population with ages between 50 and 64 years old were officially retired.
- Among these, 43.2% were retired due to ill-health, which in turn about a third (30.4%) was specifically due to RD. Thus, 13.1% of all retirees self-reported RD as the main reason for early retirement.
- 35.2% of RD respondents were retired versus 27.2% of those non-RD ( $p=0.025$ ).
- Prevalence of self-reported RD seems to be associated with early retirement (unadjusted OR: 1.45; CI: 1.05-2.01;  $p=0.025$ ). Some other characteristics are also associated with early retirement, in particular older age, male gender and presence of other chronic diseases.
- RD association tends to be independently associated with early retirement (adjusted OR: 1.41; CI: 1.03-1.95;  $p=0.031$ ).

**These results are in line with previous data from the National Health Survey conducted in Portugal nearly a decade ago and confirms the impact that self-reported RD still have on early retirement.**

